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SUICIDE SQUAD
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SS
KEGEL

ARMAGETTO

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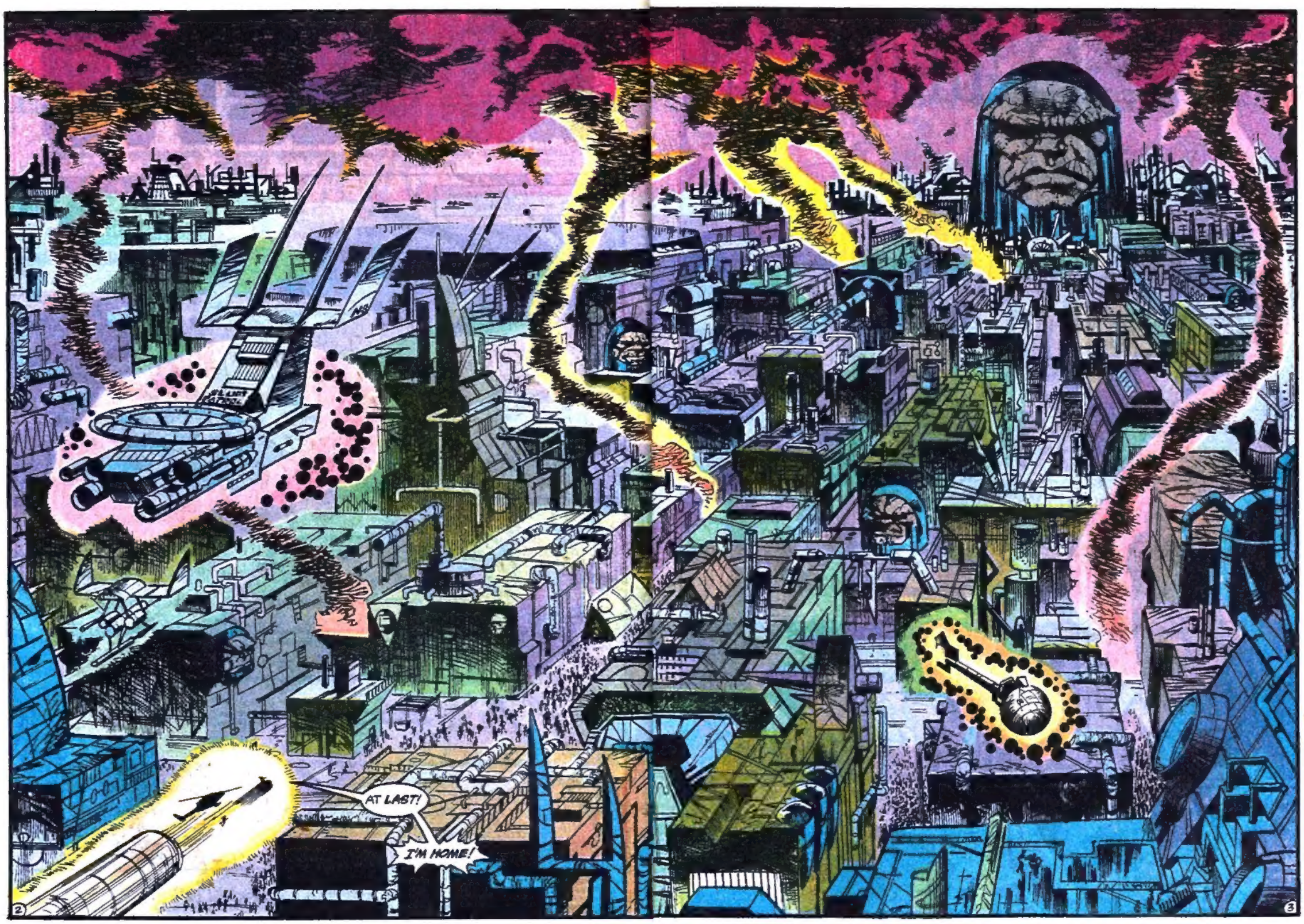

AT LAST!
I'M HOME!

YO, SHADE! FOLLOW DOWN WITH THE CHOPPER! WE'RE COMING IN FOR A LANDING!
SCHRAAANK!
KRASHH!
WELL, ANY LANDING YOU CAN WALK AWAY FROM IS A GOOD ONE, I GUESS. AND WE CAN STILL WALK.
START REVIVING OUR "GUESTS" BUT KEEP BARDA GROGGY.
LASHINA!
YOU KILLED ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHEN YOU PUT THE SHUTTLE DOWN!
FORGET 'EM. THEY'RE JUST LOWLIES.
4

WHAM
FILTHY MURDERER! YOU'VE DRAGGED ME INTO THIS BUT, BY META, YOU WON'T DRAG ME DOWN TO YOUR LEVEL!
I ALREADY HAVE.
I THINK YOU'VE OUTLIVED YOUR USEFULNESS TO ME, SHADE.
UHHHHH KRAK!
FORCE FIELD, EH?
UHHHHH KRAK!
I'VE CRACKED FORCE FIELDS BEFORE!

IF THEY JUST STOOD THERE AND LET YOU, WHOEVER HAD THOSE FORCEFIELDS WERE PRETTY STUPID!
I'VE ALWAYS HELD MY EMOTIONS BACK, LASHINA--AFRAID OF WHAT THEY MIGHT DO IF CHANNELLED INTO THE VEST!
WHIIIIIII....!
WHAM!
LET'S FIND OUT, LASHINA, SHALL WE? I'M GOOD AND MAD!
YOU CAN SEND THESE PEOPLE BACK TO WHERE THEY BELONG OR WE CAN FIND OUT JUST HOW MUCH DAMAGE I CAN DO--HOW MUCH YOU CAN TAKE!
WHUD!
KRAK!
WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE, LASHINA?!
6

YOU'VE GOT MORE SPINE THAN I *THOUGHT*, WORM-- AND I'D *LOVE* TO DANCE WITH YOU A LITTLE MORE, BUT *NO ONE* GOES HOME UNTIL I DO WHAT I CAME TO DO.

OR WE CAN ALL DIE HERE. HOW DO YOU WANT IT?

WORM!

WAKE UP OUR COMPANIONS, IVY. IT'S TIME TO GET GOING.

ECONOMOS, TRY TO RAISE *ORACLE*. I WANT THE WHEREABOUTS OF EVERYBODY AND ANYBODY WHO KNOWS HOW TO REACH *APOKOLIPS*! PLUS ALL DATA AVAILABLE ON IT AND *DARKSEID*!

BETTER TAKE THIS CALL *FIRST*.

SARGE STEELE ON THE LINE.

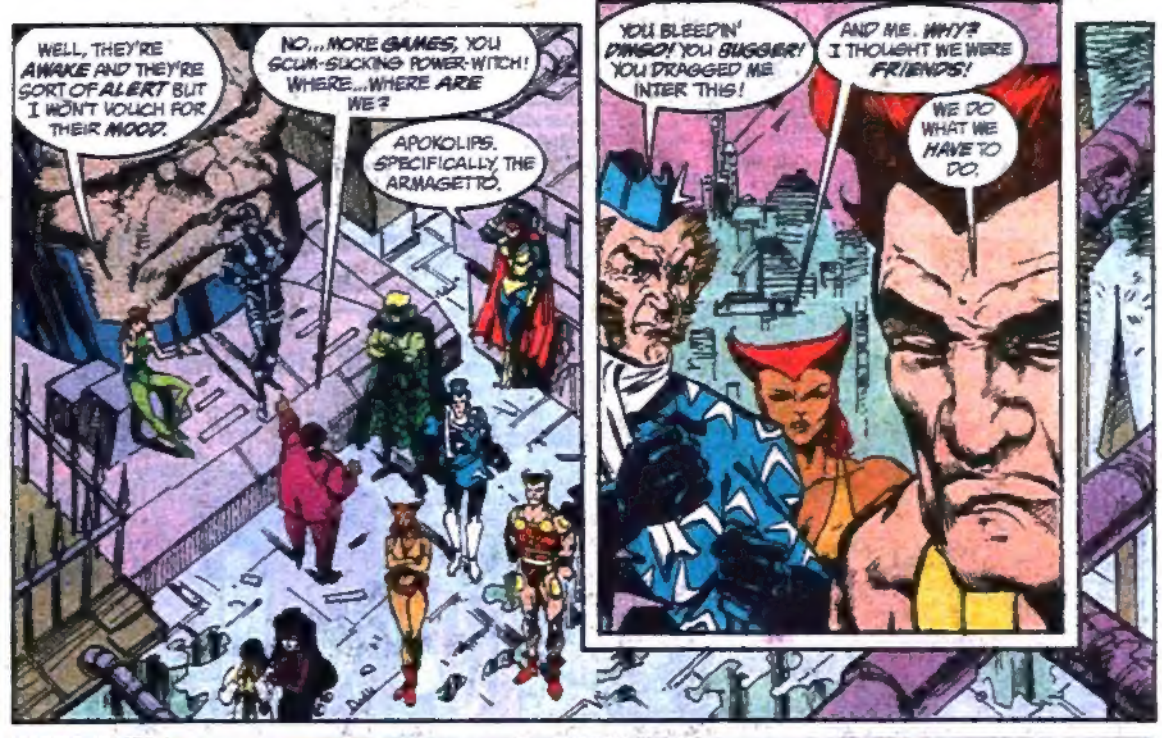
ECONOMOS GAVE ME THE HEADLINES, BEN. WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF DOING?
OPENING EVERY DAMN CELL IN THIS PLACE AND GOING AFTER THEM -- SOON AS WE GET HOLD OF MISTER MIRACLE. HE COMES FROM APOKOLIPS; FIGURE HE'S GOT TO KNOW A WAY BACK!

NEGATIVE, TURNER. YOU'LL DO NOTHING OF THE SORT!
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S ON APOKOLIPS AND I WON'T THROW MORE LIVES AWAY. ALL AUTHORIZATION TO USE FELONS IS SUSPENDED -- AND KEEP AWAY FROM MISTER MIRACLE UNLESS YOU WANT TO LAND IN A CELL OF YOUR OWN AT BELLE REVE! YOU GOT THAT?

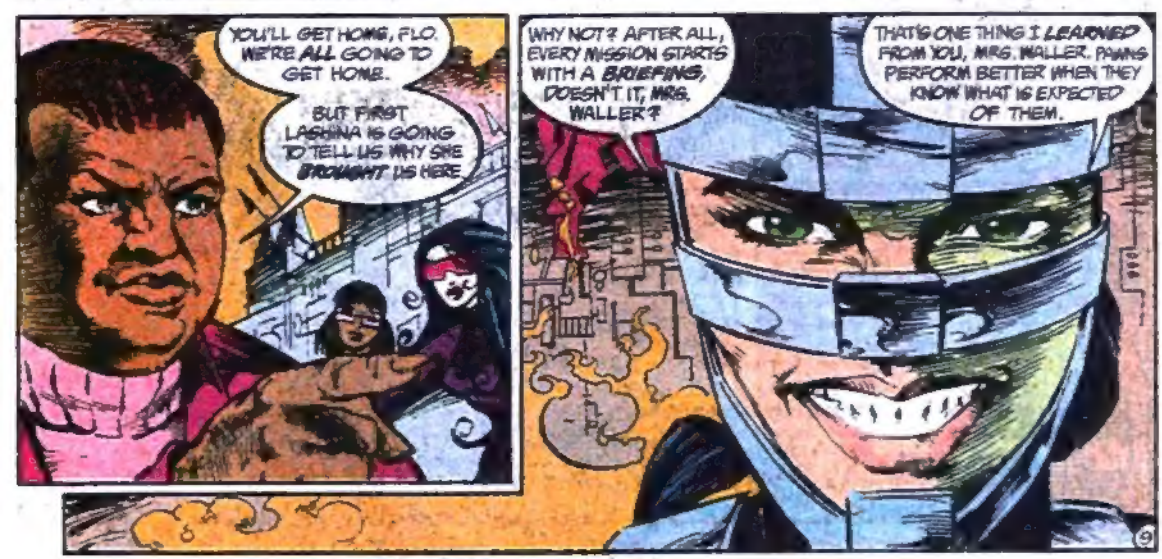
YEAH, I GOT IT.
BEN, I'M SORRY! I WAS JUST REPORTING TO HIM LIKE I'M SUPPOSED TO DO. LISTEN, WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO NOW?

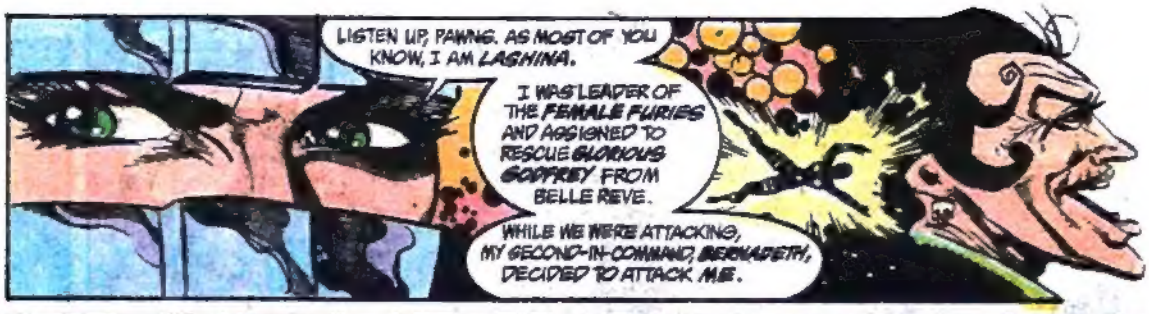
MAN SAID I COULDN'T USE FELONS; DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT LUNATICS.

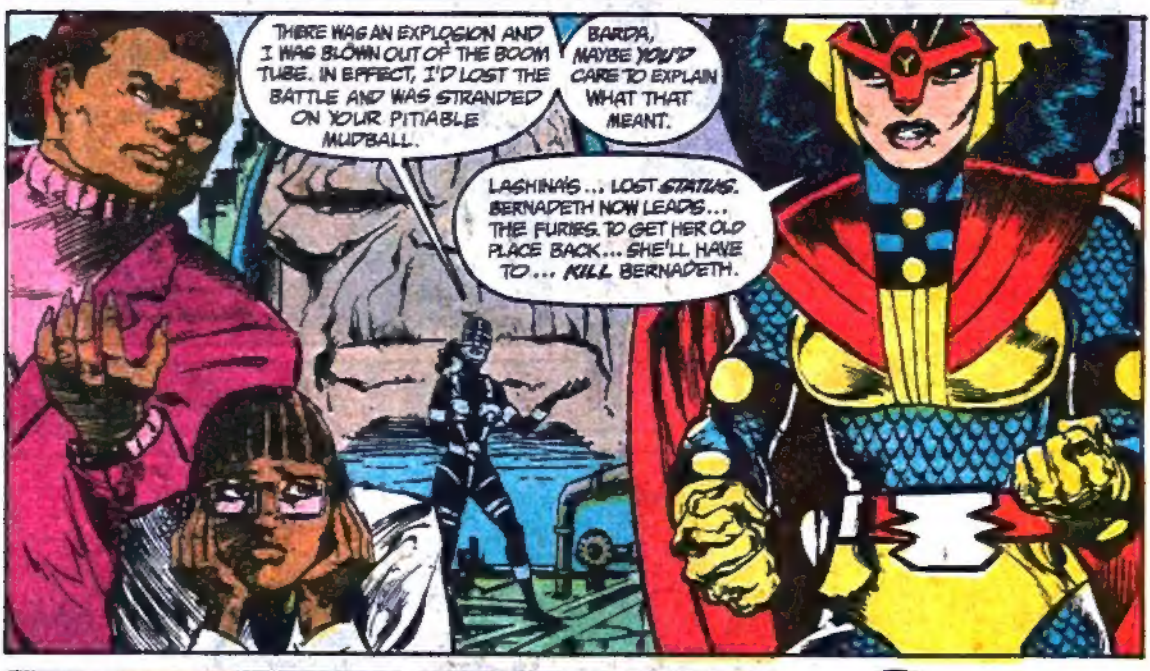
GET ME ON A FAST FLIGHT TO GOTHAM. ASK ORACLE IF THERE'S ANYONE ELSE OTHER THAN MISTER MIRACLE WHO KNOWS A WAY TO APOKOLIPS.
AND IF STEEL GETS A WHISPER OF THIS, I'M TEARING OUT YOUR THROAT WITH MY HANDS.
OOOO-KAAAAY!


WELL, THEY'RE AWAKE AND THEY'RE SORT OF ALERT BUT I WON'T VOUCH FOR THEIR MOOD.
NO... MORE GAMES, YOU SCUM-SUCKING POWER-WITCH! WHERE... WHERE ARE WE?
APOKOLIPS. SPECIFICALLY, THE ARMAGETTO.
YOU BLEEDIN' DINGO! YOU BUGGER! YOU DRAGGED ME INTER THIS!
AND ME. WHY? I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS!
WE DO WHAT WE HAVE TO DO.

I F-F-FEEL SICK... AND SCARED... AND I WANT TO GO HOME!
WHILE PART OF ME-- GOD HELP ME!--FEELS LIKE I HAVE COME HOME!


YOU'LL GET HOME, FLO. WE'RE ALL GOING TO GET HOME.
BUT FIRST LASHINA IS GOING TO TELL US WHY SHE BROUGHT US HERE.
WHY NOT? AFTER ALL, EVERY MISSION STARTS WITH A BRIEFING, DOESN'T IT, MRS. WALLER?
THAT'S ONE THING I LEARNED FROM YOU, MRS. WALLER. PAWNS PERFORM BETTER WHEN THEY KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM.


LISTEN UP, PAWNS. AS MOST OF YOU KNOW, I AM LASHINA.
I WAS LEADER OF THE FEMALE FURIES AND ASSIGNED TO RESCUE GLORIOUS GODFREY FROM BELLE REVE.
WHILE WE WERE ATTACKING, MY SECOND-IN-COMMAND, BERNADETH, DECIDED TO ATTACK ME.

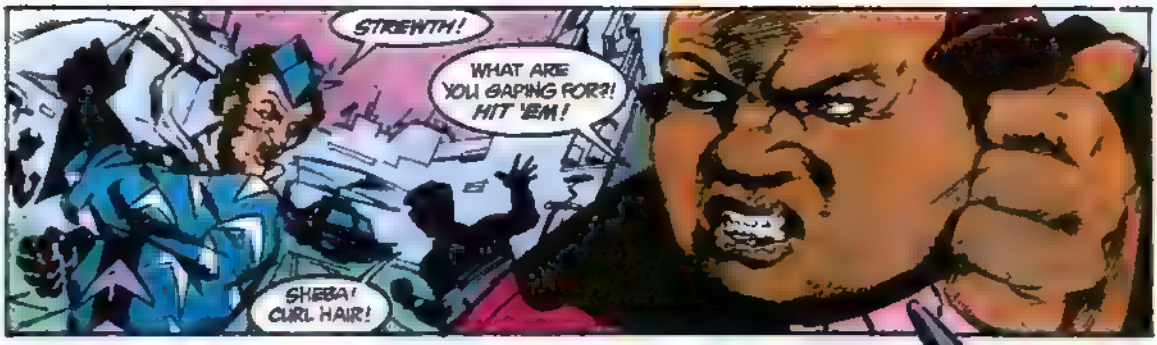

THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION AND I WAS BLOWN OUT OF THE BOOM TUBE. IN EFFECT, I'D LOST THE BATTLE AND WAS STRANDED ON YOUR PITIABLE MUDBALL.
BARDA, MAYBE YOU'D CARE TO EXPLAIN WHAT THAT MEANT.
LASHINA'S... LOST STATUS. BERNADETH NOW LEADS... THE FURIES. TO GET HER OLD PLACE BACK... SHE'LL HAVE TO... KILL BERNADETH.

SO? GO KILL HER. WHAT DO YOU NEED US FOR?
LASHINA'S... AN OUTCAST NOW. EVERYONE HERE... WILL SUPPORT BERNADETH.

I NEED CANNON FODDER --SOMETHING TO KEEP THE OTHERS BUSY WHILE I GO AFTER BERNADETH.
YOU'LL DIE HERE ANYWAY.
THAT'S US, HUH? AND IF WE REFUSE?
THEY'LL KILL YOU FOR SPORT.

SO WHAT'S THE WALL S'POZED T'DO, EH? KILL 'EM WITH HER BAD ATTITUDE?
SHE PROBABLY COULD, BUT HERE.
SUNH!!
IF YOU CAN LIFT THE MEGA-GUN, MAYBE YOU CAN USE IT.
FWIP!
THUD!
I CAN LIFT IT, ALL RIGHT, WITCH...
LET'S SEE IF I CAN USE IT!

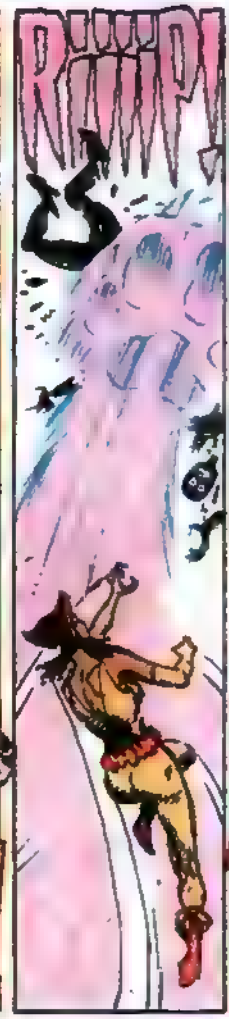
KLIK!
THOUGHT AS MUCH.
DON'T WORRY IT'LL WORK ON ANYONE OR ANYTHING ELSE ...BUT ME. FED IT MY AURA PATTERN.
NEVER EVER LET YOUR OWN WEAPONS BE TURNED AGAINST YOU, EH BARDA?
THAT'S RIGHT. I READ IN YOUR FILE YOU CAME FROM HERE, TOO. CAN'T YOU GET US HOME?
IF I HAD THE MEGAROD... SURE.
LASHINA'S GOT IT... AND THEY HAVE ME TOO DOPED-UP TO TAKE IT FROM HER.
WELL, WE'RE NOT DOPED UP. WHAT SAY, Y'BLOODY BIKE--CAN YOU KEEP ALL OF US AWAY?
MOST OF US ARE GONNER DIE HERE ANYWAY, RIGHT? YOU CAN'T KILL US ALL!
I WON'T HAVE TO.
LOOK WHAT'S COMING
PARA-DEMONS!
GO AHEAD, WORM! WHICH "BARNEY" DO YOU WANT NOW?

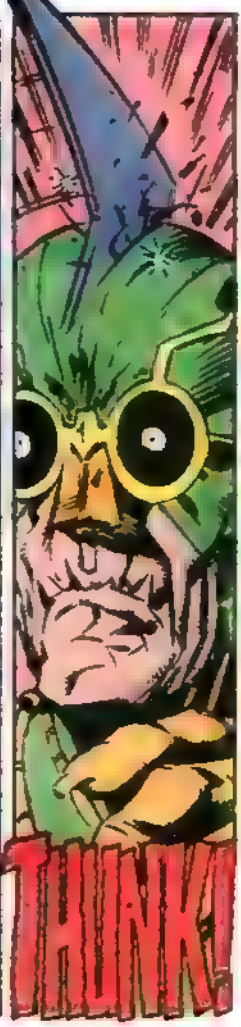

STREWTH!
WHAT ARE YOU GAPING FOR?! HIT 'EM!
SHEBA! CURL HAIR!

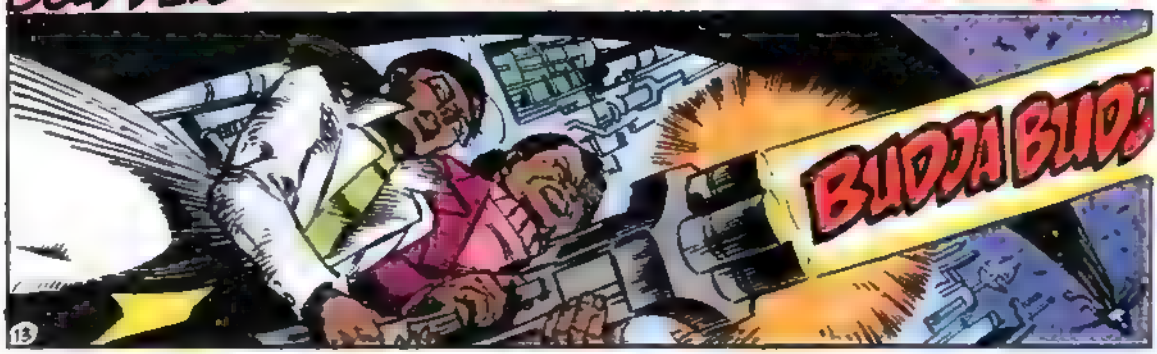
BUDDA-BUDDA!

KRAK!

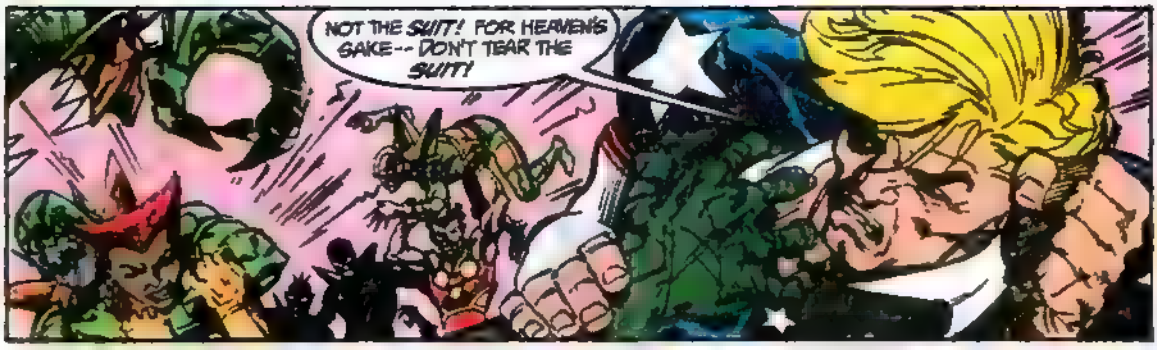
WHAM!


RÜÜP!


THUNK!


BUDDA BUD

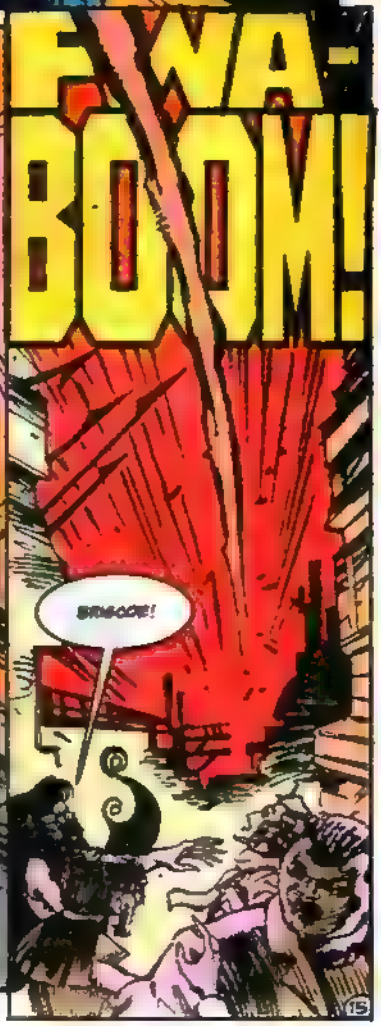
FORGET IT, NIGHTSHADE! THESE THINGS THRIVE ON DARKNESS!
BLOODY HELL!
KEEP MOVING! YOUR BEST HOPE IS TO FIGHT YOUR WAY THROUGH THEM!
WHiiiiiiiCRAACK!
AND YOU'D BETTER BE PREPARED TO KILL.
SNAP!
WHiiiiiiiiiCRAACK!!!
I'M WILLIN' T'KILL IF THEY'RE WILLIN' T'DIE!
FWIPFWIPFWIPFWIP
WHOOM!
MAYDAY! POSITION BEING OVER-RUN! NEED FRIENDLY FIRE! MAYDAY!
BUDDABUDDA
14


NOT THE SUIT! FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE-- DON'T TEAR THE SUIT!

NO! NOOO! YOU'RE KILLING SHEBA!

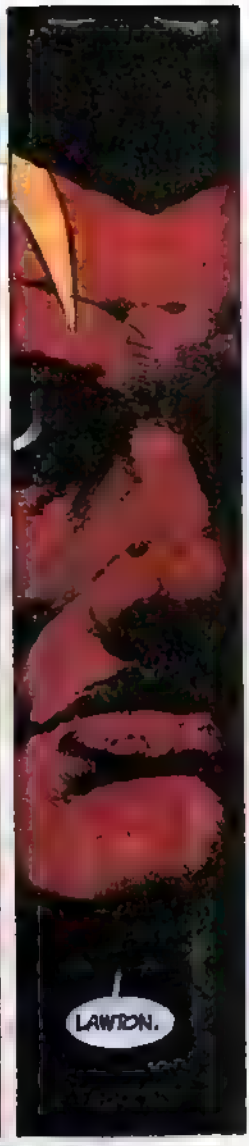
SHEEEE-BAAAAA!

BRISCOE!

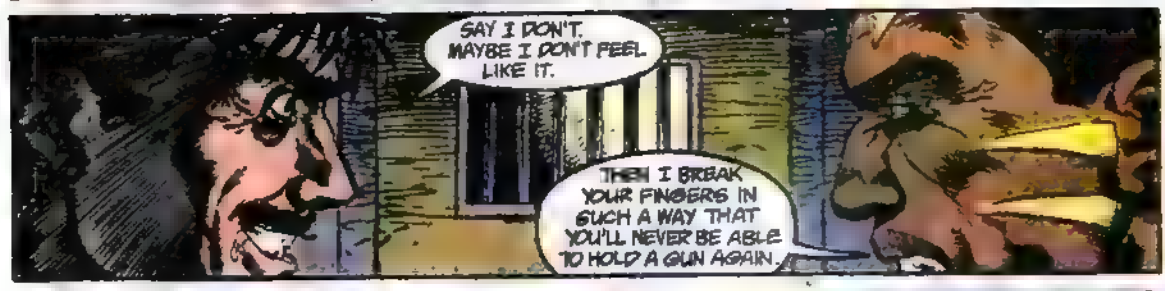

FWA-BOOM!
BRISCOE!

MOURN LATER! FOCUS ON THE LIVING! OR WE'LL ALL WIND UP AS DEAD AS HIM!
BOOM!
CHOOM-CHOOM!!!
KRAK!
SLASH
LET'S GO. THOSE WERE THE EASY ENEMIES.
FROM HERE ON, IT GETS TOUGHER.

ARKHAM ASYLUM (AS IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE WE WERE


LAWTON.

TURNER. I TAKE IT YOU WANT ME TO GO WITH YOU SOMEWHERE. WALLER SEND YOU?
SHE DOESN'T KNOW I'M HERE. NO ONE KNOWS I'M HERE, INCLUDING THE PEOPLE RUNNING THIS SNAKE PIT.
I'VE GOT A JOB FOR YOU, LAWTON. YOU'RE COMING WITH ME.


SAY I DON'T. MAYBE I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT.
THEN I BREAK YOUR FINGERS IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO HOLD A GUN AGAIN.

ARMAGETTO.

LOOK, I DON'T WANT TO BE A NAG BUT THIS ISN'T MY IDEA OF A REAL FUN PLACE! THERE'S NO PLANTS--NOWHERE! I MEAN, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO?
DIE. YOU SERVED YOUR PURPOSE

WHAT AM I GOING TO DO? THE POWERS IN THE COSTUME, NOT ME! I'VE MAYBE FORTY PERCENT OF IT!
THE COURAGE IS IN YOU. NOT THE COSTUME.

I'M AFRAID I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KILL HERE JUST TO SURVIVE! THAT MEANS SURRENDERING MORE AND MORE TO THE ANIMAL SIDE OF ME, EVE, AND THAT SCARES ME!
THERE'S SOME THINGS WORSE THAN DEATH, MARI.

THIS IS STUPID! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME! WHY DID SHE BRING ME?!
HUSH UP, CHILD. DOESN'T MATTER WHY SHE BROUGHT YOU--I'M TAKING YOU HOME!

I HAVE AN IDEA WHY YOU BROUGHT THE GIRL, LAGHINA, AND I'M TELLING YOU THAT IF YOU TRY IT, I'LL KILL YOU MYSELF.
WILL YOU... HAUSFRAU?
FFFFWWWAAAAAASSSHHH!!!
WELLLLL! HEL-LO, GIRLS!

COME TO PAY A COURTESY VISIT TO YOUR DEAR, OLD GRANNY?
I NAME BERNADETH A TREACHEROUS SLUT AND HAVE COME TO CLAIM HER HEAD, OLD HAG!

GO?
AS FAR AS WE'RE CONCERNED, YOU'RE A LOSER, LASHINA-- A DISAPPOINTMENT. WINNERS MAKE THE RULES HERE, YOU KNOW THAT. BERNADETH WON.
WHIRRRRR
SO I'M MAKING IT A REMATCH!

SWAK!
WE BACK WINNERS, HERE! ALL LOSERS DESERVE IS A GRAVE!

LET'S MOVE, TROOPS! LAGHINA'S A WITCH, BUT SHE'S OUR ONLY TICKET HOME!
AND YOU--GRANNY--I AM FED UP WITH YOU! AND YOUR WHOLE DAMN PLANET!
IF I GOTTA PAVE OUR WAY HOME WITH YOUR BODIES, I'LL DO IT--
--STARTING WITH YOURS!
SHOOM!

COME ON! THERE'S GOT TO BE SOMEONE ELSE WHO KNOWS A WAY TO ARGOLIPIS!
SURE THERE ARE-- ON NEW GENESIS! NOW YOU WANT TO TELL ME HOW WE GO CALLING THERE? YOU GOT AN AREA CODE?
ORACLE CAME UP WITH NO OTHER NAMES?!
IT SAID SCOTT FREE MIGHT KNOW, BUT YOU CAN'T TALK TO HIM. MAYBE IF I DID... AFTER ALL, STEEL DIDN'T ORDER ME...!
A TECHNICALITY. AT THE VERY LEAST, JOHN, STEEL'D HAVE YOUR JOB.
SO WHAT?! BEN, THOSE ARE MY FRIENDS, TOO! I'M GOING TO THINK PENSION WHILE THEIR LIVES ARE AT STAKE?!
YOW! WHAT...?!
FW SSH HHH!!!

HI.
SOMEONE HERE NEED A LIFT?.
NEXT:
THAT HIDEOUS STRENGTH AGAIN!

SUICIDE NOTES

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L-5072

Dear Kim, John, Bob, John, Todd and Company,

To be honest, I was considerably less than thrilled when I first heard *The Janus Directive* was going to interrupt the continuity of SUICIDE SQUAD for several months and begin a storyline that would cross over into other titles. The only thing I hate worse than a protracted continued story, is a protracted continued story that spills over into comic books I don't ordinarily buy.

I have faith in Ostrander, however, (and Yale, too, after their collaboration in the DEADSHOT mini-series) so I gambled on *The Janus Directive* and even bought the CHECKMATE! crossover books, mostly out of curiosity.

So far, I'm glad I did. Ostrander and Yale's work has been stronger than Kupperberg's, but on the whole, the storyline has been interesting and lively.

Yet, I'm wondering:

1) If the Amanda Waller impersonator shown in a previous, pre-*Janus Directive* story isn't now running the Squad. Is the Waller now directing the Squad the *real* Amanda or the one who held Amanda at gunpoint a few issues ago?

2) Exactly what sort of role Lois Lane is going to play in the outcome of the story. I was hoping she wouldn't be the same little gadfly she is when she's pestering Clark Kent, and, instead, play a more meaningful role. I want to see Lois do more than annoy hardened criminals for an interview. This series is a good chance to broaden Lois's personality a bit and make her more active and responsible. Let her use her talents as an investigative reporter in this story.

3) Why did Peacemaker become a government-sponsored project instead of having him committed to Arkham Asylum? In fact, you could probably pull Two-Face, Croc, or even Deadshot out of that Asylum and have them become more effective government agents than Peacemaker has been.

T.E. Pouncey
Wichita, KS

1) It's the real Amanda, all right. She subdued her impersonator and got deep into deception which came back and bit her.

2) We tried to work with Lois but space limitations didn't give us the opportunity we expected.

3) Peacemaker, in the DC Universe, has always been a government-sponsored project although Christopher Smith may be better off cooling it in Arkham. Check out current issues of CHECKMATE! to see what I mean.

*****

Dear John,

I just finished reading SUICIDE SQUAD #29 and it was pretty good. First, I am beginning to enjoy the character of J. Danfield Kale, but what would be really interesting would be his wanting to *really* be in control of the Suicide Squad and fighting the Wall for it.

And speaking of The Wall, I agree with her comment about getting Deadshot out of Arkham and as soon as possible, please.

I also liked Briscoe's part of this story and to actually see him get scared. I think that's the first time I've ever seen that since the series started.

It was really interesting how the Force of July has been portrayed of late—more as heroes than as, for lack of a better word, terrorists. Very interesting.

Oh, and a tip of the hat to Mr. Snyder and Mr. Marcos. Killer art, guys; keep it up.

Donnie Matthews
Route 2 Box 214
Ararat, VA 24503

*****

Dear Mr. Ostrander,

There are very few issues of any series that could hold their own against something like DARK KNIGHT, BLACK ORCHID, or *Meltdown* but SUICIDE SQUAD #29 was one of the few issues that can!

The Janus Directive is the best storyline of '89. Pitting Checkmate, the Atom Project, the Force of July, and Peacemaker against the Squad was great but I have a question. I know that Belle Reve has a crack unit of security guards, human and robot alike. But, they had their hands full with Eiling's men, and the Knights and the Squad had all it could handle with the Force of July, so why didn't Waller "recruit" some of the villains at Belle Reve? Chronos, Bolt, and Cat-Man would've come in real handy.

One of the things I really liked about this issue was that it had Peacemaker in it. I've been waiting 29 issues for the Peacemaker to show up here and man, was it worth the wait! The thing about Peacemaker that makes him such an interesting character is that he's crazy. I mean, this guy is totally bonkers. The guy thinks he's got people living in his helmet. Sheeesh! But while I'm on the subject of Peacemaker, any plans yet for another mini-series?

One more question: why couldn't you have let Black Thorn take out The Wall on page 19? That would've been great!

Marson Fedrick
PO Box 514
Ellisville, MS 39437

Given the situation at Belle Reve, as you described it, would you trust a bunch of criminals you've never worked with to defend you? I wouldn't.

And yes, there are plans afoot for another Peacemaker mini, this time from editor Jonathan Peterson and writer Paul Kupperberg.

Finally, we are not about to let Amanda die since we have so much in store for her. This issue's little bout with Granny Goodness is just the beginning.

*****

Hey Bob,

Kim, John, and Dr. 3 turned in an excellent job on the interior but the aspect that impressed me most this time around was the breathtaking cover by Karl Kesel.

Uncle Elvis
17650 Dawson Road
Dawson Springs, KY 42408

*****

Dear Robert,

Wow! This *Janus Directive* just keeps getting more and more exciting with each issue. I just finished reading SUICIDE SQUAD #29 and was I impressed. The battle scenes were brutal, plenty of violence to keep my primal urges satisfied. It was great seeing all the agencies taking each other on, but I'm glad they finally figured out they were being duped and go kick some Kobra butt!

I'm a big fan of the MANHUNTER book, so I'm happy to see that he's such an integral part of this operation. Peacemaker is new to me; I find him very interesting—enough to go check out his mini-series.

Amanda never ceases to amaze me. When everybody thinks she's the enemy or just plain screwed up, she always comes through in the clutch with all the answers. Definitely one of the most interesting characters in comics.

I like the current team in SS, especially Count Vertigo. He's working out really well with the team and I hope he recuperates very soon.

Robert Knuist
Mountain View, CA

*****

Dear Bob,

Just what happened on page 21 of SUICIDE SQUAD #29? One moment everyone was beating the crap out of each other, next there was a black panel followed by Firestorm's eyes telling everyone to stop fighting, and magically all the tricked protagonists are happily sitting down in a conference room. Was Firestorm's message telepathic, or videoed around Belle Reve, or does he just have a very loud voice? And why did everyone believe him? I agree the fighting had to be stopped, for the good of the people involved as well as the progress of the story, but the transition wasn't very smooth.

Aside from this distraction, I thoroughly enjoyed the accelerating action and involvement of the various factions in the conflict, seeing a large number of characters skillfully woven into the story. And I hope there really are some major changes in the secret armies at the end of the storyline, rather than a restoration of the status quo which so often is the outcome of such epics. The major difference I can see is that the agencies won't be secret anymore, so they'll have to have official clearance and government support if they are to remain effective. This won't please Waller, as she likes to run her ship her way and without outside supervision, but I've no doubt she'll find a few loopholes in whatever net they try to throw around the Squad—she's already coped with the revelations following the Cray assassination with little change to the practical aspects of the Squad. Moreover, the events of *The Janus Directive*, including what I assume will be a final battle with Kobra, should unite the individuals that make up the Squad into a better team, in terms of morale as well as fighting style.

Malcolm Bourne
6 Craigwell Road
Prestwich, Manchester
England
M25 8EF

Given that Nightshade used her power to effectively black out the entire building, and then the powerful voice of Firestorm gave everyone pause, it makes sense that the teams would have stopped their actions and thought for a moment. While the sequence did not get the space it probably deserved, it did exactly what it had to do—give everyone a moment to stop and let us move the story to the next level, which was, of course, the climax.

*****

Dear Bob,

I just wanted to let you know that whoever made the decision to hire John K. Snyder to work for DC is one smart individual. It will be obvious to anyone reading this that Dr. 3 is my favorite artist in the comics field.

The Dr. is a genius when it comes to panel and layout selection. Also, about the only way to find a more intelligent or innovative use of angels in one's art is to move to the film genre and study the use of camera angles by Hitchcock and Welles. Let's stick with film so I can say that Dr. 3 brings film noir to the printed page with his use of shadows and contrasts. Just look at the opening sequence and you'll see my point from the downshot on page 1 through the use of shadows to create mood on pages 2-4, all the way to the end of the book with the dramatic shot of Kobra.

I think after seeing his work for a few months, you'll agree with me that he is something special. I've yet to miss a single piece of published work by John and he just keeps getting better. If I may, I would like to suggest that John be allowed to do the cover art for SS. I am not faulting or slighting Mr. Kesel when I say that Dr. 3 is the *best* cover artist in the business.

Willie R. Mellen
1861 Dieter Street
Maplewood, MN 55109

Some high praise indeed for John's work. At this time, Willie, our plans are for John to pencil and Karl to ink the covers to SUICIDE SQUAD.

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Dear SUICIDE SQUAD,

Just a request and/or bit of advice—I'm not sure what category it will fall under. It seems inevitable that the Trickster will be entering these pages, and I feel very strongly about just *how* he should appear (or at least *shouldn't* be done). This is given with the kind intentions and the hope that the character will be given the proper "respect."

First, the Trickster has definitely reformed, and was never a bloody or violent character in any way. Please don't have the character become a killer, even for the sake of self-defense, as many characters entering the book are wont to do. Also, please don't have him entering the group via a jail sentence.

What could be done is to have the Trickster visit the prison as an extension of some of his lecturing he was starting (as per BLUE DEVIL), either to the staff—on dealing with the mischievous criminal mind—or to certain less-hardened super-criminals on the benefits of reform. If played up right, this concept can work outside the confines of the humorous approach taken in BLUE DEVIL. If this angle doesn't work for you, perhaps you could have the Trickster joining the crew temporarily to exchange information.

I certainly don't intend for this to insult your capacity and ability as creative minds; simply, I want to be assured that you've at least been made aware of different outlooks to this one situation. Too bad Tricks isn't behind the flying pies business.

Robert Sarre II
PO Box 1953
Seffner, FL 33584-1953

At present, we actually are resisting public demands and have no plans for the Trickster in these pages anytime in 1989. Of course, that could change tomorrow but it's a reasonable certainty. Also, you can trust John, Kim, and Dan on how the character would be handled.

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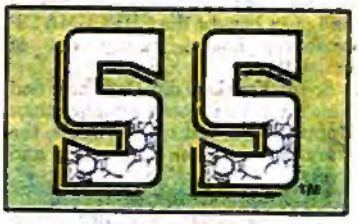

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

The Squad is fighting for its life on Apokolips, Lashina and Bernadeth are at each other's throats, and a rescue team is about to arrive, courtesy of the Forever People. Sounds like a climax is coming, doesn't it? Next month, a 22-page knock-down, drag-out spectacular that will resolve a handful of storylines and subplots and alter the Squad line-up forever! Who will live, who will die, who will leave, and who might join will all be dealt with by John, John, and Geoff. Sounds like this is the *one* issue not to miss next month, right?

And in your spare time, don't forget to check out the first part of *The Elemental War* now being waged over in FIRESTORM as we witness the creation of the DC Universe's new water elemental: NAIAD. As for me, I re-launch STAR TREK and STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION this month, so I've got my hands full.

See you next month with your wrap-up comments on *The Janus Directive*. Until then, keep smiling!

—Bob Greenberger